[196] I would like to direct the attention of future travelers to the following plants, the leaves and blossoms of which are greatly desired, if he would like to become acquainted with the wild field fruits of the old inhabitants of the country: 222 137

a) *omam!gaub is a plant with succulent leaves; the carrot-like underground part has a strong purgative effect. The name of the plant expresses this drastically: "one lets it fall (!gau) at the door (ams) of the hut (oms)", or, more optimistically translated, "one just makes it to the courtyard." [Picture. omam!gaub. 1/2 natural size. The "Ostrich foot". 2/3 natural size.] [278]

) *!ga-/marib- (3. st. cf. p. 352.) or -ha-bab has a smooth, carrot-like, underground part and thin, narrow leav-, 3 centimeters long and crinkled at the edges.

)*/kau-bus forms juicy root formations as big as a child's head.

Pelargonium incrassatum Curt., called */a-mi-ai-b, the "Ostrich foot", (so called because of the shape of the budding leaves) is the last of the plants which should be mentioned here because of their edible underground parts.

b) The chief fruits are gourds and cucumbers because of the abundant water in their flesh and the food content of their seeds.

The Topnaars in the region of Waluis Bay received their name !na-ranin from the gourd fruit !na-rab, the Acanthosicyos horrida Welw., on which they live for a large part of the year (cf. Analysis in the appendix). The nara matures in the first four months of the year: the chief harvest time is in February and March. [101]

Then the kraals become desolate. The poorer families depart for the dunes with all their belongings, either taking their mat house with them or building a scanty shelter of brushwood, which can scarcely be called a hut, and only return to their old dwellings to get water when it is unavailable in the nara field. Wealthier Hottentots stay at home and have the nara brought to them by slaves and only go out for the day on a visit or for inspection. [Picture. Half-ripe nara fruit. 2/3 natural size] 221 222 [342] [567]

The individual families have inherited rights to definite nara bushes (cf. Plate IX above and illustrations, page 146, 147). That is the only case known to me of private ownership of immoveable property outside of the hut area among the Hottentots. The Hottentot defends his nara bushes from attacks by fellow tribesmen by bringing a legal complaint before the captain. No quarter is given the Berg-damaras and Bushmen. I know of several cases in which the thieves 222 423 [627] 222 423 628

were simply shot down at the place by the nara bush where the owner found their tracks and meted out the death sentence. If the captain takes notice of such an occurrence at all, he never takes the side of the slain man.

[198] For the preparation of the nara I found that the Hottentots in the Walvis Bay region possessed bone knives made from the ribs or the lower leg bone of cattle. The word for such a bone knife, °/ā·ros (3, f) seems to me to mean "the little sharp one" (/ā - to be sharp, -ro, dimin., -s, personal suff., fem.). [Picture. Ornamented Bone Knives of the Topnaars, about 1/2 natural size.]

The fruit is cut in half with these knives, and in times of abundance, eaten raw. The insides, which can easily be separated from the rind when the fruit is ripe, fall naturally into five double sections, have a pale reddish-yellow color and are saturated with a cool sweet juice, which in taste and aroma, is not unlike a thin vanilla-flavored egg drink. But a single fruit suffices to produce on the tongue and gums of the novice an unpleasant feeling of soreness.

The nara achieves its greatest importance as a national dish when it is preserved and stored in the huts for provisions. The peeled fruit is cut into pieces the size of walnuts. The ripe fruits are cooked with a little fat, the unripe with a little water as well and stirred to a pap with a whisk of the most primitive kind, °dõdi·b (also called !no/bo·s). Then the hot mass is poured into a sieve, a grass basket, °gabiras, which is shaken up and down by its strong handle until the sulphur-yellow or brownish-yellow pap has strained through. This is poured out on a dune, after a slightly slanted bed has been smoothed out for it. After one or two days, the mass has solidified to a dark-brown flat cake, heavily encrusted with sand at the bottom. [Plate IX, Nara Dune in the Kuiseb River. Salt Crusts in the Namib behind Walvis Bay.] [199] Such a nara cake, °ǂgoa/g(a)a·ribeb, is about 1/2 meter wide and 3/4 of a meter long and 3 millimeters thick, flexible, kneadable, tough, shining with dark streaks when cut, brownish-yellow and frayed when broken. It has the spicy smell of fresh pumpernickel and leaves a greasy sheen on the fingers. When I was first shown the cake, I watched the old torn dirty rag expectantly as it was being unwrapped and in which I expected to see the delicacy, until I realized that it was the cake itself that was being handled. It tastes better than it looks: sweet, powerful and aromatic; it dissolves slowly in the mouth.

B. The Tribal Community

The scattering of the population over wide areas and their unstable manner of living, both a result of the climatic conditions of the country, has not permitted the social and civil life of the Hottentots to establish rigid norms. In addition, the confusions of the last years have swept away the ancient customs that had persisted until recently, so that a unified presentation of the social life of the Hottentots in their state and community is impossible today. The traveler [318] can only note those basic beliefs that he finds in his dealings with the natives which are still alive among the people even though they may not be publicly expressed. The little that I can report here concerns the Hottentots' views about property, sexual relations, and power.

1. Property

The only instances of private ownership of land probably occur only in the nara-fields of the Kuiseb region behind Walvis Bay. The hut is movable property and the so-called "gardens" were originally foreign to the Hottentot and do not count here. The usable stretches of land, the pasture areas, are common property of the families who have their cattle there. The right to this pasture area exists only as long as no stronger community contests it. Battles for pastures and cattle have been fought by the Hottentots among themselves from time immemorial. The lack of organization beyond the narrow tribal bounds has contributed greatly to the splintering of national power.

Within the tribe (another ethic exists in regard to the white man) private ownership of movable property, especially cattle, is sufficiently protected. Theft is considered a serious wrong and is very severely punished (see Power).

Repayment of a debt (again only among themselves) is considered a matter of honor but is often taken lightly enough: "Iaũs ga ǂareǂa ota nĩ ra ma tsi," i.e. When the rock-rabbit gets a tail (i.e. never), I will give it back to you."

In spite of the Hottentot's strictness in preserving his own private property rights, he is not at all miserly. He not only divides the last thing he has with his own people, he is (and was particularly so as all the older accounts testify) particularly hospitable to passing strangers. It would be superfluous to prove again that this hospitality was not based on a shrewd expectation of gaining some advantage, but on a deeply rooted feeling of brotherhood.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

Gei //Khauan. The latter, whose founder was the eldest of the five brothers, are acknowledged by all the others to be the senior tribe among them. In spite of this claim to a common ancestry, however, the tribes have for a long time been independent of one another; although, according to Hahn, the chief of the *Gei //Khauan* received an annual tribute from the rest of the tribes up to as late as 1863.[1]

Each tribe has its acknowledged chief, *gao-aob*, and also an acknowledged claim to certain large permanent fountains or pools in river beds. Before the coming of the Orlams and of the white man the boundaries between the different tribes were not defined in any clear manner. Different waterholes or fountains in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific tribes, who used to wander about from fountain to fountain, seeking pasture for their cattle. Other people could use the water, too, but one tribe had a prior claim to it, established by habit, and had the right to expect that any other group intending to camp there for a long time would ask permission to do so.

The tribes do not seem to have ever been at all large. The number of people in each ranged apparently from several hundreds to a couple of thousand. It is difficult to obtain any trustworthy figures, owing to the great disruption that has taken place in the social organization of the people, but Palgrave's estimate, made at a time when conditions were less disturbed, may be taken as a useful guide to the relative size of the tribes in 1876. The Gei //Khauan then numbered approximately 2,500, the /Aunin 750, the //O Gein 800, //Khau /Goan 1,000, //Haboben 1,800, !Khara Gei Khoin 800, !Gami /Nun 2,000, Afrikaners 800, Witboois 2,500, Bethanie Hottentots 2,000, Berseba Hottentots 700, and the Amraal Hottentots 600.[2] In 1923, however, of the still surviving Nama tribes the Gei //Khauan numbered only about 100 and the //Khau /Goan 200, while, on the other hand, the Berseba Hottentots, who had avoided all conflict with the Germans, were able to claim over 3,000 adherents.

The Clan

Each tribe was composed of a number of patrilineal clans (*/hau /aoti*, lit. things within the tribe), i.e. groups of people claiming to be related in the male line.[3] One of these clans claimed seniority, and

[1] *Tsuni-//Goam*, 97.
[2] W. C. Palgrave, *Report of . . . Mission to Damaraland and Great Namaqualand in 1876*, p. 34, quoted by Hoernlé, op. cit., 7.
[3] Hoernlé, op. cit., 9–16; Olpp, op. cit., 23; Kohler, op. cit., 338–9.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

Chapter XI

ECONOMIC LIFE

Land Tenure

178 The extension of European settlement and control in South Africa and the resultant breakdown in the tribal organization of the 423 Hottentots have had as one of their first consequences the fact that independent tribal possession of land among the latter has long ceased to exist. At the present time the vast majority of the Hottentots are scattered far and wide over the country, without any definite tribal allegiance at all, still less with any definite tribal territory. It is only quite recently that reserves have at last been set aside in South-West Africa for the remnants of certain tribes, such as the Berseba Hottentots, the Bondelswarts, and the Swartboois. But the system of land tenure prevailing here can hardly be regarded as identical with that which existed when the tribes were still independent and living under their own culture. In the first place, these reserves are under the control of the European administration, and then also the Hottentots have changed profoundly in many of their habits and ideas, as a result of long intercourse with the Europeans, and some of them have even taken in a small way to agriculture. It is necessary, therefore, to refer to the descriptions of the earlier writers in order to learn what were the laws and customs of the Hottentots regarding the tenure of land before they were so greatly affected by the influences of white civilization.

423 The Hottentots in their old form of life derived the bulk of their 619 subsistence partly from their flocks and herds, partly from the products 166 of the chase. Land, therefore, was of value to them chiefly as pasture and hunting ground. It is clear from the accounts of the early Dutch and other travellers that every Hottentot tribe in the Cape had its own territory, into which strangers might not intrude for hunting or pasture without first obtaining permission. There is, however, no concrete information as to the demarcation and control of these territories. The reading of history shows that the Hottentot tribes moved about freely over the country in search of pasture, and the boundaries between the different tribes, as far as can be ascertained,

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

do not seem to have been at all clearly defined. It appears rather that in the early days of the Dutch settlement the different Hottentot tribes were situated far apart, each tribe forming certain centres round which it migrated, and claiming as its territory all the land where its members were accustomed to graze their herds or to live. But the right to this land existed only as long as no stronger community disputed it. From the earliest historical times fights for pasture lands are recorded as occurring among the Hottentots, the inevitable result being that a dispossessed tribe would have to move on to new lands. In any case the pasturing of their cattle in a country so subject to long droughts as South Africa undoubtedly occasioned continual and sometimes even extensive movements, so that anything in the nature of rigidly-defined tribal areas probably did not exist.[1]

In South-West Africa, where grass is more easily found than water, stress was laid particularly on the possession of waterholes, and little care was otherwise taken to define the boundaries between the different tribes more clearly. Different fountains or pools in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific tribes. This, Mrs. Hoernlé points out, did not mean that other people could not use the water, but that one tribe had a prior claim to it, established by habit, and had the right to expect that members of any other tribe intending to camp there for a long time would ask permission to do so. She quotes in this connection an old document in which the chief of the Rooi Natie complains that the Berseba Hottentots have taken possession of one of his waterholes. He gives them permission to stay, but states firmly that this does not mean he gives over the fountain to them. "The water is my water," he says again and again.[2]

With the coming of the Orlams from the south and the pressure of the OvaHerero advancing from the north, territorial disputes in Great Namaqualand became more frequent, and increasing emphasis was laid on the recognition of tribal boundaries. Intrusion was not readily allowed, but, on the contrary, deeply resented. If a tribe wished to move into the territory of another, application had first to be made to the chief of the resident tribe. If the two were on friendly terms, permission might be given freely; but if relations were not too good, a tribute was generally demanded as acknowledgment of the resident

[1] Cf. Snow, *Native Races*, 238 sqq.; Godée-Molsbergen, *Reizen in de Kaap in de Hollandsche Tijd*, vols. i and ii *passim*.

[2] "Social Organisation of the Nama," 6. The document referred to is published in *Berichte der Rheinischen Mission*, 1854, p. 155.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

tribe's ownership and supremacy over the area. And so we see, for instance, that the Orlams when they penetrated north of the Orange River found the indigenous Nama tribes tolerating their presence only on condition that they recognized the jurisdiction of the chief in whose territory they settled, and that as an outward mark of submission they paid him an annual tribute of cattle or horses in return for the right to live and graze their herds on his lands. The effect of this restriction may easily be imagined. No sooner had the newcomers settled down and become accustomed to their surroundings than they refused to pay any further tribute. In the inevitable wars that followed the Nama were no match for their better armed and more experienced adversaries. Before very many years had passed the order of things was reversed, and the Orlams were dominant, while almost all the indigenous tribes either were absorbed or retained their lands on the same terms of tribute and vassalage as they had formerly exacted.[1]

How jealous was the regard for boundary and territorial rights in these days may be seen from the following incident. In 1889 the //Hobesen chief Hendrik Witbooi rather went out of his way while travelling from Keetmanshoep to Gibeon, and passed with his men over a corner of the lands claimed by the Bondelswarts of Warmbad. Whereupon Willem Christian, the Bondelswart chief, wrote him a strong letter of protest. "Such circumstances," says Willem, "are likely to cause dissatisfaction"; and if the "dear captain" required anything in his area it was only right first to apply for permission to enter, and to await the reply before doing anything. This would have avoided "misunderstandings"; "for it is beyond my comprehension that one chief should enter another chief's area without notifying him and making a request."[2]

On the whole, therefore, it would seem that although every Hottentot tribe had a claim, established by long exploitation, over a certain stretch of land, other tribes might seek and obtain permission not only to pass through this territory, but even to make use of its water and pastures, on condition that the prior rights of the resident tribe were recognized and acknowledged. Permission might, of course, be refused, and sometimes was, when war would probably result if encroachment nevertheless took place. But the extensive wanderings of the different Cape Hottentot tribes in the early days of the Dutch settlement imply that here, at least, little objection was raised as a

[1] *Report on the Natives of S.W.A.* (Cd. 3146), 70, 73–6; Hoernlé, op. cit., 4.
[2] *Report on the Natives of S.W.A.*, 76.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

rule to intrusion, so long as sufficient grass and water were available for all.

Of the sentiments of the Hottentots towards their land we have but little information. Mrs. Hoernlé, in one of her recent papers, maintains that even to-day the old tribal land is still closely connected in the minds of the people with their ancestors. The ghosts of the *//naon*, the ancestors, haunt any old locality occupied by the tribe, and anybody visiting such a place must protect himself against them and propitiate them if he is to escape. "Thus, ten years ago," says Mrs. Hoernlé, "I visited, with a native guide, a spot which had long been deserted by the Topnaars. It was a long day's journey up and down great sand dunes, and both I and my guide caught bad colds. The next day my guide's wife came to see me, shaking her head wisely. 'I knew I should find you ill,' she said, 'and I have been scolding my husband, who should have known better. When you got to Wortel you should have gone straight to the water, and put a stripe of wet clay on your legs and on your forehead, and then you should have said:—

Ti //Naoaon /Haoa
/Gaise /khai hoa te te
aibe oaoa

My ancestors' territory
Run nicely to meet me
I see you first.

Then all would have been well.'" "The important thing here," continues Mrs. Hoernlé, "is that one begs the goodwill of the spirits, claims relationship with them, and enters once more into possession of the old tribal territory by contact with its waters."

A similar ceremony takes place when a Nama goes visiting relatives in another tribe. The head of the kraal visited must take wet clay and soot from the pot, and put a broad stripe on the visitor's forehead, so that he may be able to "eat nicely and drink nicely". "Here it would seem," remarks Mrs. Hoernlé, "that the stranger is given the protection of the society into which he has entered, and is free from danger that might otherwise beset him in a strange place. The preceding example shows perhaps what the danger is, namely, the hostile */Hei /Nun* [ghosts of dead people], and this example makes a little clearer the nature of the protection sought when one is visiting an old locality of the tribe. One identifies oneself with the place and its spirits, and so gets protection and support instead of hostility."[1]

From the facts just noted, one would almost have expected to find the fear of hostile ancestral spirits acting both as a guarantee of possession to the resident tribe and as a sort of supernatural restraint

[1] "The Social Value of Water among the Hottentots", 319–20.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

775 769 to encroachment upon the territory of another. There is unfortunately no other record of such usages to be observed when visiting a strange place, or linking up the occupation of land with supernatural agencies. Whether similar usages did exist among the Cape Hottentots, but have escaped observation, or whether in the case of the Naman, and especially of the Orlams, European ideas had completely overshadowed them in practice, cannot now be determined. Certainly the great freedom with which the Hottentots appear to have wandered from place to place, from their own territory into that of another tribe, does not argue in favour of any pronounced dread of the ghosts haunting such places, nor does the undoubted fact that disputes over the possession of land were frequent.

423 425 All the land claimed by a tribe was the common property of that tribe. It could under no circumstances become the property of an individual, nor was it the property of the chief; and it was generally regarded as inalienable. In the early Cape Records several instances are noted of land having been "sold" to the colonists by Hottentot chiefs. It is more than probable that such "sales" were looked upon by the natives themselves not as alienation but as the granting of usufruct, and the "purchase money" as analogous to tribute paid for this use. Even in more recent times, when the concepts of sale and purchase had become generally familiar to the Hottentots, the alienation of land to other tribes or peoples was extremely rare. The chief had no right to dispose of the land or of any portion of it without first obtaining the consent of the families under his rule, and the purchase money had to be divided equally amongst them.[1]

423 Every member of the tribe had a right as such to the use of its land, water, and grazing for himself, his family, and his stock. He could move freely over the tribal lands, and erect his hut wherever he pleased, without restriction or interference by the chief or anybody else. These rights, however, were merely those of usufruct, and in no case implied full ownership to the exclusion of others.[2] The only instance recorded of recognized private ownership of land or its resources occurs even to-day in the Nara bushveld of the Kuiseb regions behind Walvis Bay. Here each Topnaar family has an hereditary claim to certain */nara* bushes and their fruit. Trespass by other members of the tribe is reported to the chief and dealt with by him; but if the

[1] Wanderer, "Ueber das Recht der Namas," 673, 684; *Report on the Natives of S.W.A.*, 75–6; Vedder, "The Nama," 144; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten," 350.
[2] *Report on the Natives of S.W.A.*, 76; Schultze, *Namaland und Kalahari*, 197.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

thief is a Bergdama or a Bushman, he is tracked and simply shot down, the chief as a rule taking no notice at all of such cases, and, where he does, never siding with the party of the thief.[1]

In the other Nama tribes there seem to have been no private rights of this nature. In certain respects, however, there was a limitation to unrestricted exploitation of the land and its resources by any member of the tribe. Hunting rights over the tribal land, for example, were common to all, but the game was regarded as the herds of the chief. Anybody shooting big game was therefore expected to give him the head and the four lower legs of the animal, while of small game he received portions of the meat. Refusal to yield this tribute was punished. Pasture lands, again, were also common to all, but the chief could order certain grazing grounds to be vacated in order that they might be rested. His consent was also necessary if the inhabitants of any kraal wished to burn the veld shortly before the rainy season, so that when the first rains fell new juicy grass might spring up. These regulations, of course, do not involve interference with established personal rights, but are to be regarded rather as the exercise of recognized control vested in the chieftainship.[2]

In other directions we find recognition given to the prior rights of an individual. If a man dug a well or opened a spring, it was regarded as under his special authority, and, after inspection by the chief, was named after him. Every passer-by had to have his permission before using the water, but it was equally his duty to see that no stranger or his stock was denied access to it. Any man, again, who found a swarm of wild bees in the cleft of a rock or in the hollow of a tree could acquire rights of ownership over their honey by breaking a few twigs and laying them in front of the hive. Whoever then ignored this sign and took away the honey was regarded as a thief and had to recompense the owner. But here also the chief or the head of the kraal exercised some measure of control. If the swarm was still young, it might not be molested, under penalty of punishment, and the owner was also punished if by extracting all the honey he caused the swarm to wander away elsewhere. Moreover, he was expected to give several good combs of the honey to the chief or the kraal head.[3] The private rights casually acquired in this way should not, however, be confused in nature with those noted above to the */nara* bushes, which are based on heredity and shared equally by all members of the tribe.

[1] Schultze, op. cit., 197, 318.
[2] Wandres, op. cit., 673–6; *Report on the Natives of S.W.A.*, 76. [3] Wandres, loc. cit.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama
Cape Hottentots

boundaries of the tribe, his escort, believing that they have now shifted the odium for the deed, may allow their avarice to come to the fore and will plunder all his goods.[1] It is evident, however, that the Hottentots in general are friendly to strangers, and willingly allow them to pass through the land, even if permission has not first been obtained. There is none of that rigid insistence on territorial exclusiveness which has made the Bushmen fight shy of any intrusion upon their lands.

Warfare

Where, however, parties of strangers entering the land wish to make use of it for pasturing their herds or for hunting, permission must first be obtained from the chief. This, as we have seen, is often given freely, while on the other hand a tribute may sometimes be demanded, as the Orlams found when they came into Great Namaqualand. At times permission may even be refused altogether, especially if there is not enough grass or water for all. If encroachment nevertheless takes place, it leads almost inevitably to war. Quarrels over intrusions of this sort are recorded among the Hottentots from the earliest historical times, and are said to have been the most frequent cause of war between neighbouring tribes. Cattle-lifting, especially when the herds have been allowed whether by accident or design to stray over the border, deliberate damage to another tribe's pasture grounds by setting fire to the grass, and the abduction of women are also mentioned as common causes of dispute. Reprisals were sure to follow, and when the one side sought to defend its possessions actual fighting took place. Some of the Cape Hottentot tribes, as a result of such grievances, were almost perpetually at feud with each other, and many are the little wars between them which figure in the early Cape Records.

These wars do not seem to have been attended with much loss of life.[2] The weapons employed were the same as those used in hunting —the spear, bow and arrow, and the kirri. Before commencing hostilities the injured side might send messengers to their opponents, stating the wrongs of which they complained and demanding adequate satisfaction. If this was refused, all the men of the tribe, under the leadership of their chief, would meet at some appointed place, and

[1] "Die Nama-Hottentotten," 305–6; cf. Frisch, op. cit., 362.
[2] Grevenbroeck, "Uit den Ouden Tijd," 368–9; Kolb, *Vorgebirge der Guten Hoffnung*, 92–8; Frisch, op. cit., 323–4; Stow, op. cit., chaps. xiv–xvi, *passim*; Theal, *History of Africa before 1795*, vol. ii, *passim*.

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913) 1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

occupies approximately two fifths of this area. In the past the northern limit of the Nama was indefinite until the pressure from the north by the Herero became serious, and certainly since the early part of the last century the Nama have been chiefly concentrated in the area of Great Namaqualand. This country is a high level plateau, or tableland, with an average altitude of 3,500 feet above sea level. Along the coast there is a strip of absolute sandy waste, of varying width but averaging about 35 miles across. The country rises rapidly from the coast inland, and the central tableland is cut off from the desert strip, or Namib, by a plateau range of sandstone formation running from north to south with an average height of 4,500 ft. The northern boundary is formed by the Awas mountains, a rugged mass of primary formation rising to a height of 7,200 feet above sea level and forming the watershed of the country. The rainfall over the whole area is extremely small, averaging from 4 inches in the south to 12 inches in the north. The country is, then, on the whole a barren plain with sparse vegetation and little permanent water. Yet after a season of sufficient rains it becomes a waving sea of grass, admirably suited both to cattle and sheep.

Such is the home of the nomadic pastoral Nama who originally owned great herds of large-boned, long-horned cattle and flocks of fat-tailed hairy sheep. Before the coming of the missionaries these people wandered about from fountain to fountain, seeking pasture for their stock. Large permanent fountains, or pools in river beds were claimed as their property by the different groups, rather than areas enclosed by definite territorial boundaries.

There are at present in the Protectorate, besides remnants of the various groups of the Great Namaqua with which this paper is mainly concerned, remnants of other groups who came in from the south of the river in the early part of the nineteenth century, when the general movement of the Hottentot peoples was away from the white settlements. These incoming groups spoke practically the same language as the Nama groups; indeed, the language throughout the area is very similar, so that one can hardly even speak of dialects, though undoubtedly there is a slight difference of vocabulary in the widely separated groups and, in some cases, a slightly different intonation.

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

101 connection. They mean the big group of *//Khauan*, and the young group, or, literally, the children, of the *//Khauan*. The derivation of the name *//Khauan* I do not know. The Topnaars, or the *≠Aunin*, are the people of the point, referring to their inhabiting the sea coast, the extreme point of occupation of the Nama. An alternative name is the *!Gumin* of which I do not know the meaning.

621 All these groups which I have enumerated I propose to speak of as "tribes," for, in spite of their claim to a common ancestry, 423 these groups have been for a long time independent of one another. Each group has its acknowledged chief and its acknowledged fountains, though before the coming of the white man and of the Orlams the boundaries between the different groups were not marked in any clear manner. In an old document, translated in the Rhenish Missionary Record for 1854,[4] the chief of the Rooi Natie complains that the Berseba Hottentots have taken possession of one of his fountains. He gives them permission to stay, but states specifically that this does not mean that he gives over the fountain to them; "the water is my water," he says again and again. We shall also see a little later that the different water holes, or fountains, in the country were always thought of as belonging to certain specific groups. This did not mean that other people could not use this water, but that one group had a prior claim to it established by habit, and had the right to expect that any other group intending to camp there for long would ask permission to do so.

175 A certain light is thrown on the antiquity of these different divisions of the Nama people by the record of the travels of the 621 Frenchman, Le Vaillant. Travelling north of the Orange river in 1783, he came to an encampment of Hottentots who called themselves Gami nu Khois.[5] The place to which he went, and the name, both point to the fact that he found himself among the *!Gami ≠Nun*, or *!Gami ≠Nu Khoin* (*Khoin* meaning "people"), so that at least as early as 1783 the *!Gami ≠Nun* formed a distinct group.

[4] p. 155.

[5] F. Le Vaillant, Second Voyage dans l'Interieur de l'Afrique, Vol. II, p. 261. The author spells the name "Caminouquois."

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
FX13 Hottentot FX13
NAMA

marriage and what should be contributed to the reception: 584
or the young man chooses for himself and then the engagement does not consist in asking her and her saying " yes " but in an action. The young man bashfully points a little stick at the girl of his choice. When she takes the stick, breaks it in two and throws the part broken off at his breast, the question is settled and they understand each other.

No matter how the engagement came about—from the day of the betrothal " separation-period " sets in. The engaged couple dare not meet each other, under no circumstances speak to each other and have to avail themselves of certain other people who have to tell the one what the other has to say. Such a period may sometimes be of considerable duration.

2. The marriage ceremony is as a rule celebrated in the 585
house of the parents of the bride in the form of a sumptuous meal, which is paid for either by the parents of the bridegroom alone or contributed to by both pairs of parents.

When after the marriage the bride comes to the village where the bridegroom stays—which may be days or even weeks after the marriage took place—another feast is held.

Since the majority of the Nama have turned to Christianity 585
the old customs have more or less ceased to exist. Christian 178
customs have been amalgamated with ancient traditional forms, whereby now the Christian and then the old characters appear at the wedding ceremonies.

3. The position of the woman among the Nama is by no 562
means that of the devoted servant of the man. According 593
to old custom the hut belongs to her and she disposes of everything within it. When in need of something the man has to approach his wife entreatingly and not imperiously. But since the old-fashioned huts which were covered with [342
rushes by the women have more and more been displaced by 423]
the modern houses, which the man builds with material for which he has laboured, the woman is being pushed into the background. The abode now becomes the property of the man and there is danger that the consequence will be ill-treatment of the woman. Whether a marriage is permanent 586
or not depends entirely on the relatives for when there are 602
among them those who blow a fire from the sparks of a small difference of opinion, it is easily broken, and the woman returns to her relatives. When on the other hand all the relations are friendly and work against a separation, such 595
a marriage is as a rule permanent. Polygamy was not uncommon with them in olden days, but under the influence of Christianity such cases are exceptions.

4. As soon as symptoms of pregnancy become visible the 843
husband has to devote special attention to his wife. In the first place he is obliged to appease her wishes for special food in order not to endanger the new life. The older women interest themselves so much in the expectant mother that

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
FX13 Hottentot FX13
NAMA

681 cuts with a stick until ultimately, in the olden days, the death
[685] sentence was decided upon. At the present time, the matter is then referred to the law-courts. In the case of corporal punishment the sentence was usually based on the principle of: Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth—unless the parties
[682 agreed upon another form of indemnity. Murder, high
687 treason, attempted murder of the chief and incest were always
684] punished with death according to the deposition of the old people. For the execution of corporal punishment a bailiff was appointed and fines were collected by the magistrate.

673 6. Generally they regard disrespectful behaviour towards the old, murder, homicide, bodily injury, theft, illegitimate impregnation and treason as punishable offences.

Lies and perjury are also deemed improper, but are not
[835] subject to legal punishment. In the same way adultery is not punishable. Incest becomes a case for the law only when the father refuses to be responsible for the sustenance of the child during its first years, namely, the time when it needs
[588] the nursing of the mother. As soon as the child is five years of age, the father takes it and the payments, which as a rule were in cattle and to-day are in money, cease.

It cannot, however, be said that these forms are valid everywhere where there are still unbroken Nama tribes ruled by a chief; and although they still know their old laws, they do not avail themselves of them in every case.

421 7. The proprietary rights of the old Nama were not extensive, and those of the present generation are still more limited as a result of the fact that they hardly possess any lands. Generally speaking we may say that the individual possesses nothing but is the usufructuary of what the family possesses. This even includes clothes and things for daily use.

422 Under personal property one understands the possession of cattle. A child even may receive one or more goats from his father and he uses their milk. He has the right to milk such goats without permission and their progeny are his property. Where natural conditions make it possible every person—man, wife, child—possess a few goats, sheep or even cattle. When these are to be sold it becomes manifest that this personal property continues to be regarded as family property, because in such cases, the whole family and not the individual decides whether there should be a sale or not.

423 The land or their tribal territory can under no circumstances become the property of an individual, neither is it the property of the chief. He has not got the right to dispose of or to give away anything of the territory which, in all respects, is regarded as common tribal property, unless the money received be divided amongst the families of the tribe, after they have consented to such a sale. The boundaries of a tribal territory, however, are not fixed. All lands and grounds where members of a tribe have previously grazed

their herds or lived, are regarded as territory of the tribe. 423 ●
At present these disputes do not occur any more since tribal possession of land has ceased to exist and reserves have been granted to individual tribes as usufruct and not as property. Consequently it is of no further interest to consider these old rights. They had rights of pasturage, honey, hunting, springs and water, etc., but these have ceased to exist. The Administration fixes legal boundaries for their reserves.

8. The facts with reference to hereditary rights are, how- 428
ever, quite different, for up to now the legislation of the Administration has not tampered with the rights of inheritance among the Nama—a fact which is very pleasing. As has been said, the chieftainship is inherited from the father [643]
by the eldest son. In case the chief has no sons, the sons of the eldest brother of the chief are the nearest relations entitled to the inheritance. The children inherit everything from their parents, the heritage being divided equally amongst the sons and daughters and the eldest son is regarded as the administrator of the estate under the supervision of the eldest living brother of the father.

If the children are still under age and the grandparents 429
are still alive, then they act on behalf of the guardian and take the orphans and their heritage to themselves. When childless parents die, their parents take possession of their 428
estate. When they also are dead, the chief divides the estate among the relatives, the following order being observed: the eldest sister of the husband, the brothers of the father of the late man, the sisters of the father, the sisters of the mother, the children of the brothers of the deceased, the children of the remaining sisters of the deceased, the children of his mother's sisters.

Illegitimate children of the man are entitled to an inheri- 428
tance just as the other children. Illegitimate children of the 848
mother have no claim to the inheritance as they belong to their father's family, who was obliged to support them in their first years and had taken care of them after that.

They could only depart from this law of inheritance on the oral testimony of the testator arranging it. They usually abided conscientiously by such stipulations in reverence for the deceased; and fear that the deceased might take revenge for their not complying with the stipulations of his will played no part in it.

X. Civilisation and Modern Times.

The nomadic Nama tribes had already been affected by 177
European civilisation from three different sides a hundred years ago. There were the Orlam tribes who immigrated gradually towards the beginning of last century, then the hunters and traders who travelled through the country and lastly the missionaries. It might seem strange that the